

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAN SA 03330 201331Z

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8877

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 3330

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, BBAK, ES

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION RE SECURITY PRECAUTIONS AND US
FIRMS PROVIDING SUCH SERVICES

1. TWO LEADERS OF SAN SALVADOR'S FINANCIAL COMMUNITY, ROBERTO HILL AND ERNESTO RIVAS GALLONT, SPEAKING NOT ONLY ON THEIR OWN BEHALF BUT REFLECTING THE REAL CONCERN OF THAT COMMUNITY, CALLED ON CHARGE ON AUGUST 18. CITING THE RECENT RASH OF POLITICAL DISTURBANCES, INCLUDING THE KIDNAPPING OF CHICO DE SOLA, UNIVERSITY PROTEST MARCHES AND THE WEEKEND POLIC SHOOTOUT WITH AN ALLEGED TERRORIST GANG (AND CAPTURE OF EXTENSIVE WEAPONS, DISGUISES, ETC.), THEY DESCRIBED THEMSELVES AS PREOCCUPIED WITH THE PHYSICAL SECURITY OF THEIR BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS, AND THE PERSONAL SECURITY OF THEIR EXECUTIVE PERSONNEL AND FAMILIES. HILL MENTIONED SEVERAL ANONYMOUS TELEPHONE THREATS TO HIMSELF AND HIS FAMILY.

2. ON THE QUESTION OF PHYSICAL SECURITY OF PREMISES, THEY SPECIFICALLY ASKED FOR ANY INFORMATION THE EMBASSY MIGHT HAVE OR BE ABLE TO OBTAIN ON AMERICAN FIRMS WHICH OFFER TECHNICAL SERVICES IN THIS AREA. HILL, WHO IS PRESIDENT OF THE BANCO CUSCATLAN, SAID HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES WANT TO ENGAGE THE SERVICES OF A RELIABLE. COMPETENT AMERICAN FIRM. THEY FEAR THAT IN THEIR PRESENT IGNORANCE OF SUCH MATTERS AND HASTE TO ACQUIRE PROTECTION, THEY COULD EASILY MAKE A MISTAKE AND WORSEN THE SITUATION BY CONTRACTING AN UNSUITABLE COMPANY WHOSE PRESENCE MIGHT TEND TO EXAGGERATE THE DANGER AND CAUSE GREATER THAN WARRANTED FEAR OF THE THREAT IN LOCAL BUSINESS CIRCLES. THEY MENTIONED THAT A
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PAGE 02 SAN SA 03330 201331Z

COMPANY FROM NEW YORK, LYNCH SECURITY, IS ALREADY WORKING IN

EL SALVADOR, AND COULD BE A POSSIBLE CHOICE PROVIDED ITS PREVIOUS RECORD AND REPUTATION IS FAVORABLE. THEREFORE, THEY ARE INTERESTED IN RECEIVING FROM THE USGOV A GENERAL BACKGROUN REPORT ON THAT COMPANY'S STATUS AND REPUTATION AS WELL AS A LISTING OF OTHER REPUTABLE SECURITY FIRMS.

3. ON THE PERSONAL SECURITY QUESTION, THE CHARGE BRIEFED THE VISITORS ON THE GENERAL NATURESYP PROTECTIVE PRECAUTIONS MEMBERS OF THE MISSION STAFF FOLLOW. HE ALSO GAVE THEM COPIES OF OUR SECURITY PRECAUTIONS TO US BUSINESSMEN, AND SUGGESTED POSSIBILITY OF HAVING THE RSO FOLLOW UP WITH APPROPRIATE BRIEFING FOR SELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF THEIR COMMUNITY IF THEY ARE INTERESTED.

4. THE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE WHATEVER INFORMATION THE DEPARTMENT AND/OR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE COULD FURNISH, FOR TRANSMITTAL TO HILL AND RIVAS, PERTAINING TO REPUTABLE FIRMS WHICH COULD PROVIDE THE NEEDED PHYSICAL SECURITY SERVICES. GIVEN THE STATURE OF THE PERSONS SOLICITING EMBASSY ASSISTANCE, WE WOULD APPRECIATE THE INFORMATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. MR. HILL ASKED THAT THE REQUEST BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL, IN ORDER NOT TO INCREASE THE ALREADY CONSIDERABLE APPREHENSION THAT EXISTS. MOSKOWITZ

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